

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 5, 2005. Claims 1-39 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 13, 19, 24, 29, and 36 are in independent form. Claims 1-39 have been amended as to formal matters and/or to more clearly define Applicant's invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication that Claims 13-18, 24-28, and 36-39 have been allowed, and that Claims 2-6, 9-11, 20, 22, and 32-35 include allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in proper independent form. For the reasons presented below, Applicant believes the base claims of Claims 2-6, 9-11, 20, 22, and 32-35 include allowable subject matter and therefore respectfully declines to so rewrite these claims at the present time. Please note that the changes made to Claims 2-6, 9-11, 13-18, 20-22, 24-28, and 32-39 are purely to improve their grammar and syntax.

The specification has been amended to correct minor grammatical informalities, and the original abstract of the disclosure has been replaced with a more concise new abstract. Applicant respectfully submits that the new abstract and the changes to the specification add no new matter to the original disclosure.

The Office Action raises objections to Claims 1, 6, and 11 for certain informalities noted in sections 3-5. Applicant submits that the objections to Claims 1 and 6 have been obviated by the amendments to those claims. Regarding Claim 11, the Office Action correctly notes that a multiply dependent claim cannot depend from any other multiply dependent claim. Applicant respectfully submits, however, that Claim 11 is a singly dependent claim that depends from a multiply dependent claim. Such a claim arrangement is permitted and therefore the claim

dependency of Claim 11 has not been amended. (See the example of “Claim 7” in the table in section F of MPEP § 608.01(n) (May 2004 revision).) Accordingly, withdrawal of the objections to Claims 1, 6, and 11 is respectfully requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1, 7, 12, 19, 23, and 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,233,409 (Haines et al.); and that Claims 8 and 21 are rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haines et al. in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/004073 A1 (Clothier). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections and submits that independent Claims 1, 19, and 29, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The present invention generally relates to systems and methods for printing a label to be used to return a removable component of an appliance. For example, the removable component may be a removable part of a printer or a copying machine.¹ Once an end-of-lifetime condition is detected for the removable component, data representing information to be included in images on a label to be printed and used to return the removable component is sent from a remote server to a local server via a network.

An aspect of the present invention, set forth in Claim 1, is directed to a system for printing, within a user network, a label to be used to return a component. The system includes an appliance, a detection unit, and first and second communication units.

¹ The examples presented herein are provided purely for illustrative purposes. The claims of this application are not to be construed to be limited by any details or features discussed in connection with the illustrative examples.

The appliance is connected to the user network and includes a removable component, which is provided with a memory storing information identifying the removable component. The detection unit is configured to detect a condition regarding an end of lifetime of the removable component. The first communication unit is connected to the user network and is configured to communicate with a remote server through a second network. When the condition regarding the end of lifetime of the removable component has been detected by the detection unit, the first communication unit sends the remote server a request to receive data representing information to be included in images on a label to be printed and used to return the removable component. The request includes information identifying the removable component to be returned. The second communication unit is connected to the user network and is configured to communicate with the remote server through the second network to receive data from the remote server, including the data representing information to be included in images on the label to be used to return the removable component, and images representing the information identifying the removable component to be returned.

Haines et al. is understood to relate to a system for ordering replaceable components, in which unnecessary reordering of a replacement component is prevented. The replaceable component has memory integrated therein that includes a reorder value field. The reorder value field initially is in a first state, which indicates that a replacement component has not yet been ordered, and also has a second state, which indicates that a replacement component has been ordered for the component.

Before a replacement component is ordered, the Haines et al. system checks the reorder value field of the component. If the first state is detected, a replacement component is

ordered and the reorder value field is set to the second state. If the second state is detected, the order process is terminated before another order is placed for the same replacement component.

The Haines et al. is intended to solve the problem of repeated reordering of the same toner cartridge after a printer initially detects a low toner signal, such as when the original cartridge is removed by a user, who subsequently shakes and reinstalls the toner cartridge and thereby causes the low toner signal to disappear and subsequently reappear for the same toner cartridge.

Nothing has been found in Haines et al. that is believed to teach or suggest a system for printing a label to be used to return a component, wherein the system includes “a first communication unit connected to the user network and configured to communicate with a remote server through a second network, wherein the first communication unit is configured to send the remote server a request to receive data representing information to be included in images on a label to be printed and used to return the removable component, when the condition regarding the end of lifetime of the removable component located within the appliance has been detected by the detection unit, and wherein the request includes information identifying the removable component to be returned,” and “a second communication unit connected to the user network and configured to communicate with the remote server through the second network, wherein the second communication unit is configured to receive data from the remote server, including the data representing information to be included in images on the label to be used to return the removable component, the images representing the information identifying the removable component to be returned,” as recited in Claim 1.

Haines et al. is believed to be silent regarding information to be included in images on a label to be used to return a removable component. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is not anticipated by Haines et al. and therefore respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Independent Claims 19 and 29 include one or more features similar to those discussed above and therefore are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

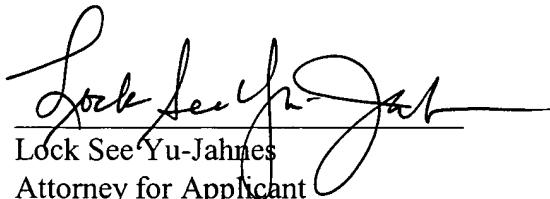
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

No petition to extend the time for response to the Office Action is deemed necessary for the this Amendment. If, however, such a petition is required to make this Amendment timely filed, then this paper should be considered such a petition and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite petition fee to Deposit Account 06-1205.

CONCLUSION

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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